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**MX**

## **Snowy, sandy four-te...**

As a fifteen year old Jeffrey Herlings won his first Grand Prix on the sand of Valkenswaard in Holland. Three years editions later and the Dutchman has yet to be beaten in a race or the GP itself - snow or shine - and still retains and 100% record after the first three rounds of the 2013 FIM Motocross World Championship. So far, so formbook

Photo by Ray Archer



**PLAY**











**TEST**

## **Untouchable...**

OTOR has witnessed the Panigale being constructed in Ducati's factory near Bologna and Roland Brown was able to blast around on the elite new 'R' version in Texas recently. If the credit card can flex enough and you boast the kind of riding skills that this sumptuous motorcycle merits then read on (and watch) to see how this fresh Duke is one of a kind

Photo by Milagro



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**MotoGP**

## Lights-up...

After all the test photos and hypotheticals the MotoGP circus is now on route to Qatar to get underway this weekend. He's been the wonder of recent laps in the USA (site of round two in three weeks) and hardly slow around Sepang so OTOR's tip for Repsol Honda's Marc Marquez to run to a debut victory is not too wild

Photo by Honda Pro Images/Northcott



**PLAY**









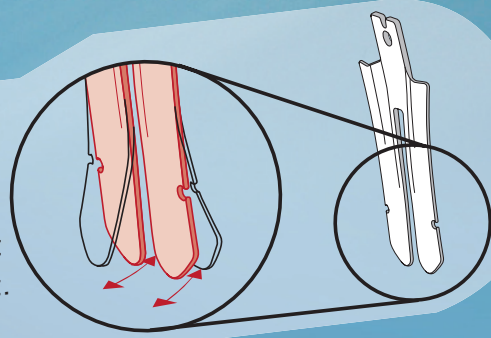
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**MX**

# GRAND PRIX OF THE NETHERLANDS

VALKENSWAARD · APRIL 1st · RND 3 of 18

MX1 winner: Tony Cairoli, KTM

MX2 winner: Jeffrey Herlings, KTM



# GOLDEN EGG

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Ray Archer



DS





The FIM Motocross World Championship had gallanted off to Qatar for a turn under the spotlight and then sweated away in the exotica of Thailand during March. So a return to Valkenswaard for the Grand Prix of the Netherlands was - in motocross terms - like settling into a worn pair of familiar old slippers. On this occasion an extra blanket and a hot cup of something would have been welcome additions as the temperatures could not have been more of a stark contrast to the sauna of Si Racha. The Eurocircuit near Eindhoven is the only Grand Prix venue I've attended in thirteen full seasons where snowed has drifted down from the vast sky overhead and last weekend the white stuff again decided to decorate the flat landscape in brief spells but thankfully never settled.

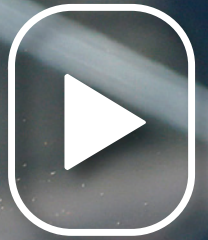
Across this stage cursed by the final stubborn drags of winter Tony Cairoli's glowing works 350SX-F and Jeffrey Herlings' 250 were again the technical reference points for the MX1 and MX2 classes. Hitting a frozen terrain that stubbornly refused to thaw into the usual wavy bumps and lumps, the Sicilian and Dutchman further extended their unbeaten records at Valkenswaard and both have now claimed the last four editions of the Grand Prix. Herlings in particular has notched eight successive moto victories, starting as a fifteen year old in 2010 and now holds 19 career triumphs; one more than the amount of years he has been on the planet. He'll need another 37 garlands to catch Cairoli who battled arm-pump and a pace-setting team-mate in the form of Ken De Dycker but claimed his second overall spoils in a row for 2013.

Herlings headed a plethora of KTMs in the MX2 class with seven of the bikes in the overall top ten heralding from the factory floor in Mattighofen and chief among the orange protagonists was the champion's team-mate Jordi Tixier, who produced a rapid performance worthy of his status as a works rider. Jake Nicholls was also a deserved podiumer in third position after coming so close on several occasions in 2012.





56 for Tony. Perhaps the dinner that Stefan Everts threw at his house on Saturday night for the KTM team inspired the Sicilian to start looking at his MX stats  
Check out 222's new App here:



PLAY











Herlings came this close to losing the Grand Prix. Don't expect the Dutchman to be rounding the first turn in the back of the pack too many times again in 2013. The shallow depth of the sand and hard-pack of the terrain prevented a more dominant outcome

"This is really special," he said. "To be an English rider on the podium at a Dutch GP is a bit unusual so for that I'm really pleased." French sensation Romain Febvre was knocked down the order due to a first moto first corner crash and Yamaha's Dean Ferris was a spectator after he decreed the hard sand was a call too far for his freshly operated collarbone. Max Anstie came close to the box.

Behind the stats Herlings was still the star of the first of two home GPs for the teenager this year with Lierop's presence on the calendar confirmed on Monday afternoon. His second moto comeback after entering the first turn second-to-last (a result of disqualification on Sunday for outside assistance: "I don't think it was so fair. I was lying on my head under the fence with the bike on top of my legs and someone just came and lifted it up," he said) was superlative as he sliced a second a lap away from Tixier's lead to hit the front in the closing stages. "I overtook guys every single lap and when I got to third I saw there was only fifteen minutes left and I knew I had to step it up," he recollected. "I saw the pitboard say 'Jordi -21' and I thought 'Ooo, I need to step it up big time!'. I think some of the others got a bit tired and I just kept pushing the same pace."

'84's perfect 150 points and fortification of Valkenswaard as his turf, no matter the size of the bumps, was the main angle of this event... even if it did mean following the formbook. "It has been a good day for KTM, first and second in both classes and I'm proud," added Herlings. "I enjoyed my weekend. It wasn't easy and perhaps the toughest one of the four when everyone was saying beforehand that it would be the easiest."

Cairolì led the rejuvenated De Dycker and Honda World Motocross' Evgeny Bobryshev onto the new rostrum as part of Youthstream's extravagant improvement to the show with the Skybox (a revised start gate procedure, new VIP suites and the podium all located in the backdrop to the gate).



Bobryshev closed a year-long period of frustration with Valkenswaard, as it was there, last March, where the Russian had crashed in the first practice session of the year and injured thumb ligaments essentially wrecking his season. His team-mate Max Nagl showed that he had recovered his fitness after the stomach virus that ruled him out of the Thai event and caused the German to lose four kilos. Softer clutch springs also eased the brute factory Honda's power and helped the former GP winner (one of sixteen in MX1) to nudge alongside Bobryshev and David Philippaerts in both motos as the red bikes were the quickest off the sandy start line.

Only two weeks split a back-to-back schedule for Grand Prix with Arco di Trento, in the north of Italy, stepping into the limelight for the first time this century and then Sevlievo hosting the Bulgarian round once more.



KTM ruled the day but Honda owned the MX1 holeshots. Dean Ferris (right) tried but two weeks was not enough time for a broken collarbone while team-mate Joel Roelants (below) gets more acquainted with the factory Yamaha









After crashes in Qatar and Thailand Jordi Tixier's pace in Holland brought relief as it did pleasure. Max Anstie (14) also showed more potential on the factory Suzuki in MX2



Business as usual for Kiara Fontanesi but Australia welcomed a new star with Meghan Rutledge entering the limelight as runner-up





A first moto, first corner crash for Clement Desalle ended his hopes of a third consecutive podium finish. Apart from his runner-up position in 2012, Valkenswaard (and sandy tracks) have not been too kind to the Belgian



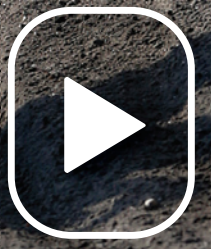






Gautier Paulin missed decent starts to be able to get close to the podium but his speed was encouraging and showed an improvement on 2012. He and Desalle (who he leads here) remain still the most promising threats to Cairoli





PLAY



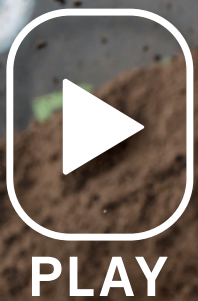


Bob Bryshev (right) wheelies across some of the ripples that many riders commented was more like a hard-pack surface than a sandy terrain. The course - changed to its original format pre-2007 - did not bother Herlings too much





De Dycker crashed while leading in each moto but his performance was more like the rider that dominated Valkenswaard in 2008. Nagl meanwhile showed that the transition from Orange to Red was going swimmingly







A broken metacarpal was a blow for Steven Frossard and the Yamaha team. An operation on Monday should see the Frenchman



Winter gear for two thirds of the Beirer family



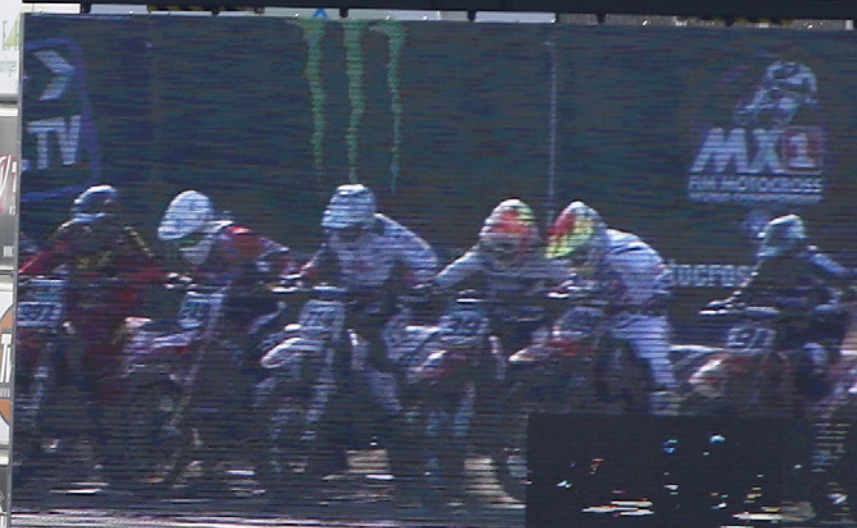
Youthstream's new Skybox was another example of how the promoters are trying to bring better presentation to Grand Prix. Apparently the enlarged structure (abolishing the waiting zone and hoisting the podium into the centre of the gate) will mean many GP circuits will have a reworked layout so the start straight is a more integral part of the track, like supercross. There was some trial and error in Valkenswaard with the scheme but it is a proactive move







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Glen Coldenhoff is starting to come of age in the FIM Motocross World Championship and proves there is more to Dutch MX than just the Herlings name. He celebrated a first pole position on Sunday







At last! Jake Nicholls shook the monkey free from his back and after six seasons of GP racing finally bagged a first GP podium



## CLASSIFICATION & WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

### MX1 OVERALL RESULT

#### Riders

1	Tony Cairoli, ITA	KTM
2	Ken De Dycker, BEL	KTM
3	Evgeny Bobryshev, RUS	Honda
4	Kevin Strijbos, BEL	Suzuki
5	Max Nagl, GER	Honda

### MX2 OVERALL RESULT

#### Riders

1	Jeffrey Herlings, NED	KTM
2	Jordi Tixier, FRA	KTM
3	Jake Nicholls, GBR	KTM
4	Max Anstie, GBR	Suzuki
5	Glen Coldenhoff, NED	KTM

### MX1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 3 OF 18 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Tony Cairoli	142
2 Clement Desalle	116
3 Ken De Dycker	115
4 Gautier Paulin	108
5 Kevin Strijbos	89

### MX2 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 3 OF 18 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Jeffrey Herlings	150
2 Jordi Tixier	101
3 Romain Febvre	98
4 Glen Coldenhoff	97
5 Jose Butron	74



A drastic overhaul in suspension set-up between the motos allowed Kevin Strijbos to release his anger after a stunted first race plagued with arm-pump and register his first top three finish back on the works Suzuki





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# **HAT TRICK FOR TONY CAIROLI!!** **TRICAIROLI**

Red Bull KTM's Italian factory rider Tony Cairoli takes his third consecutive MX1 World Championship title for KTM. The six-times Motocross Champion has won around half of all the races in 2012 on his KTM 350 SX-F and has taken more than 80 percent of the available points – GRANDE TONY!



**KTM**



## MAKING OF THE MASTER

By Adam Wheeler



Every motorsport goes through a stage when one athlete rises above most circumstances and challenges to enjoy a spell of domination. For Grand Prix motocross and the 500cc/MXGP/MX1 classes the sport was locked inside the vice of Stefan Everts between 2001 and 2006.

We are now in the midst of another cycle with Tony Cairoli showing no signs of weakness, vulnerability or insecurity that a seventh world title is firmly in his sights...and after just three rounds of the 2013 series. The Red Bull KTM rider is competing against fifteen other in the same category that boast Grand Prix winning experience but for over a year there have been hardly any rivals that have put together the package of fitness, confidence, experience and desire (and good fortune) quite like the Sicilian.

We ran a story at the end of last season, 'The A-Team', examining the crew behind Cairoli's success to try and partly explain his rich run and lofty status worldwide outside of the USA. After last weekend's Dutch Grand Prix it is immensely clear that the four times MX1 World Champion still has the pillars in place that virtually ensure his competitiveness.

What are they? After 56 career wins it is important to note that Cairoli is still very motivated. He still talks about fun on the bike, hardly ever complains and has the capacity to target subsidiary aims such as being the first high profile motorcycle racer to launch his own multi-platform App and work diligently on press assignments to try and elevate the status of the sport. He has the moral support, technical expertise, whole-backing and valued friendship of the same core group of specialists behind him; people like Nazzari, Ricardo, Claudio and others since his second season in Grand Prix in 2004.

His personal life is settled with a long-term relationship with girlfriend Jill (part of the reason for

his Dutch livery in the second moto at Valkenswaard), he is well-off and has homes in Belgium, Rome and his native Patti. Cairoli continually states he is not a rider who chases records and it is a shrewd public declaration as he will have to remain strong for a while yet to catch

### **The only thing that has stopped Cairoli for over a year has been a large glob of mud in Sweden...**

Everts' ten world titles and 101 career triumphs. He has also thrown-off the personal goal to get somewhere with supercross after seeing that his level (although not bad and he is a former European SX Champion) will not draw him into a winner's circle and his extra focus on GP motocross has swept away any of the potential drawbacks of distraction.

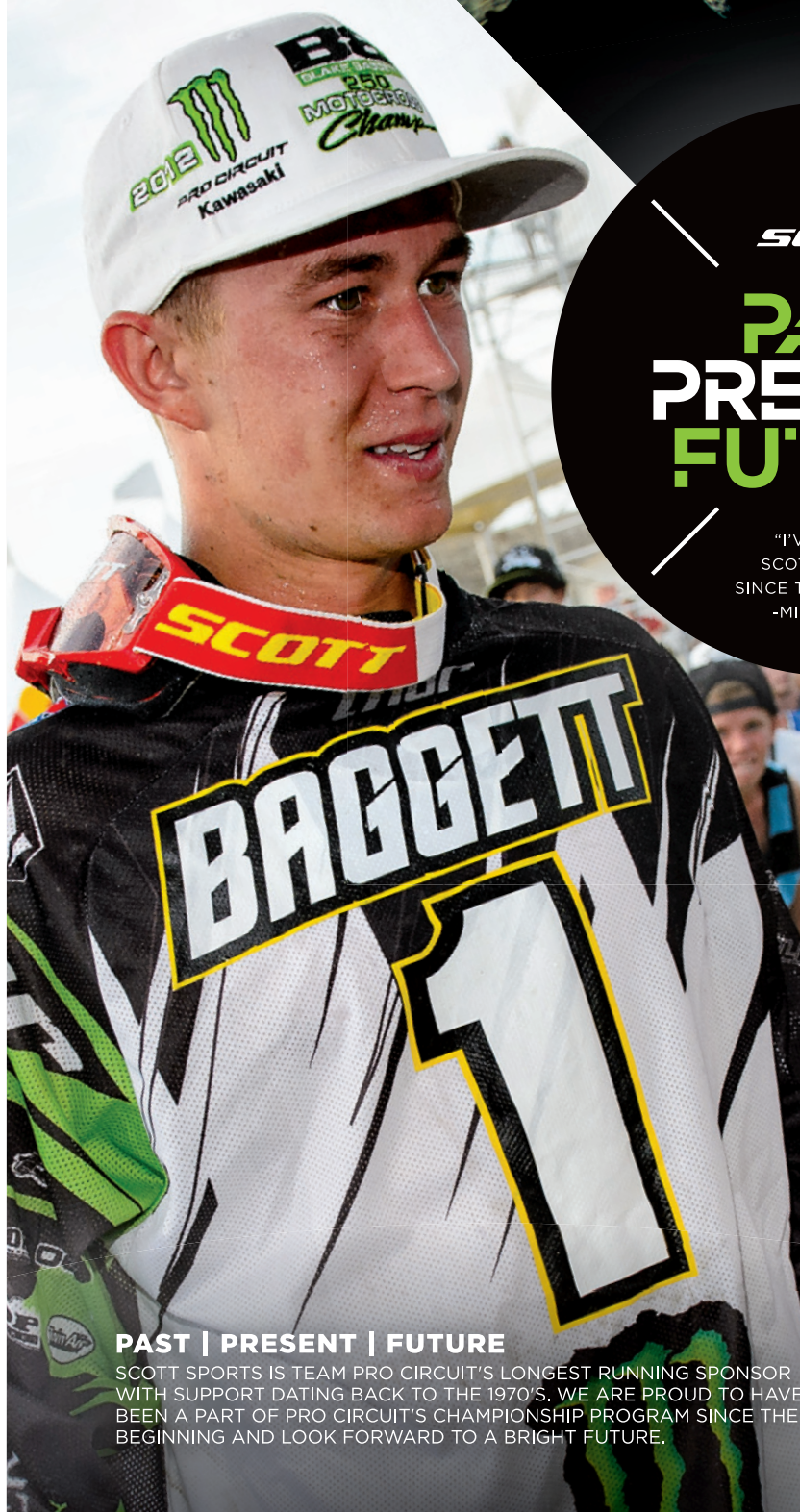
Examining closer and Cairoli uses his strength and experience to dictate circumstances on the race track. Pacing a moto, recovering from a bad start or leading the whole way from the front, finding an overtaking spot or toying with an opponent; nobody has a similar arsenal at their disposal without falling off the motorcycle and Cairoli rarely does that. The only time I've seen him look 'human' in motocross terms was in South Africa in 2008 when the worried facial expression of wrench knee ligaments while sitting in the De Carli pit box said it all. His efforts to promote the sport will be a neverending battle and perhaps the only frontier left for Tony is to tackle an AMA National appearance. It is to his credit that he asks why Americans cannot consider attempting GPs and why should he be the one to cross the Atlantic but, at the moment, 222 is swimming in a small pool and a brief leap into another pond could be the final and decisive watermark on an outstanding career to-date.





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**SCOTT**









# POL

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Juan Pablo Acevedo

**H**e battled with Marc Marquez for championships both in the old 125cc category and last year in Moto2 and since his debut as an outgoing and smiley teenager – a disposition that has not altered in six full seasons of Grands Prix – Pol Espargaro has been one of the brightest motorcycle racing talents in MotoGP. There were a few worries when the 21 year old Catalan wobbled around the back of the Moto2 field in his first year in the class in 2011 but he roared back to prominence in another infamous spat with Marquez in 2012. That Espargaro is one of Monster Energy's most valued road racing athletes speaks volumes for an exuberant character. The prospect of 'Part Three' with MotoGP rookie Marquez in the premier class in the next year or two is tantalising but first he needs to defeat the likes of Redding, Iannone, Corsi, Cortese and co for an overdue first world title.

OTOR sat down with Pol three years after first interviewing him about his fondness for motocross. We found a more athletic figure (for the demands of the heavier Moto2 bike compared to the slim lines of the 125 Derbi) and one much more comfortable with his English. Espargaro is open, quick to answer questions and frequently smiles and laughs at his own thoughts and confessions. It is impossible not to like him...



**2013 feels like a big deal for you. Expectations, attention, pressure...**

Yeah, sure. Maybe the pressure can get a bit too much sometimes but normally it is the result of good work and that people trust you. When you are strong you can find better ways to handle it and, for sure, it is nicer to be fighting for the win.

**It must feel good to be in this position, as you went from winning 125 GPs and fighting for the championship with Marquez in 2010 to a first year of obscurity in Moto2...**

It was a disaster that first year. It was so bad and so difficult. Finally we found the right path because at one stage I was in a position where I had nothing like the confidence I had in 125s. Changing to Kalex and with a different team it helped me but for sure it was the hardest year I've had so far.

**What was the problem?**

I don't know really...I don't think there was one big thing that was stopping me from going fast. I think a lot of small changes came together to make one big culture shock. I think the motorbike was 20% of it, and now the Kalex people work a lot with you and that's important because the bike can change a lot depending on the circuits. They helped me a lot to understand that bike, and my team now made a family atmosphere that was so nice for me.

**Was it mentally tough to deal with that big bounce? From hero to zero to hero again?**

Yeah! It was a big change. At the start of the championship last year I wasn't confident of doing what I did – going for the title – but it worked out well. The advantage we had (and what helped) was a different mentality and believing that a win was possible. We tried to put that in place from the first race and it paid off.

Now we know we are in that position right away for 2013.

**Did you see a little bit of the 'dark side' of racing? Less attention from press, less love from sponsors and so on...?**

Hmmm. I felt it a lot with the press and some friends there. It was easy to see who really wants you to do well. It was one of those things where it was a bad year but then looking back it was something that was good for me because I learned, both professionally and personally, and turned it around. Sometimes when you are completely lost you find out some stuff about yourself and those around you.

**Is there really a big difference in the motorcycles?**

Well the Kalex is very forgiving and you can do what you want with it. You can jump on and pretty much ride your own style. The Moto2 bikes are bigger and you really need to move these things around; it is a different world compared to the 125s. The Kalex is easier to turn and it follows your line...instead of you being victim to what the bike wants. Ultimately it is simpler to find a good setting. In my first year, with the FTR, I didn't really know how to set it up because I lacked the experience and maybe a bit more of that helped me in the second Moto2 season.

**Does the power of the Moto2 engine still get you excited?**

When you start the pre-season tests and have been away from the bike for a while then you get back on the Kalex and you really feel the power. It is important to have that sense of 'wow!' and enjoy and respect it. It's strange but when the races go by and you get to the middle of the season the feeling is not the same, you sometimes think 'Come on! Give me more horses!'











**“For me Moto2 is the best category in MotoGP  
and maybe we should take a few less risks  
because it can be so dangerous...”**







**You've been in the paddock since you were fifteen. From what you see how is it for Spanish riders to enter this championship now?**

I think it is getting more difficult. Not because the level of the ability of Spanish riders is dropping but more about things like the economy...because here [in Spain] it is so bad! To start racing at any age means the support of the family as it is difficult to get sponsors from nothing. Of course it is expensive to start in this world and for that reason I see a problem. There is also the fact that there are still a lot of Spanish riders in this world championship. It means that perhaps we are faster than other nationalities because the best has to come through but, well, this is not a Spanish championship...

**It seems that Moto2 can be a bit heavy... plenty of action and scrapping...**

It can be like that! It can be a lot to deal with on your own sometimes. I remember in pre-season for my first year we were at Valencia and I was out on the track trying to get my head around the bike for the first time. There is a right hander that is always tricky because you have just flicked over from the left. I was riding with a new tyre and on the second lap I made an incredible flip and crash in this section. It was horrible and I didn't have any idea how it happened. It was only when I got back and looked at the telemetry did I see that I had gone completely crazy with the throttle! That was a good wake-up call that I wasn't in 125s any more and would have to start again.



**What about with other riders? You had some fantastic battles in 125s and then again in your second year – 2012 – in Moto2...**

At my first Moto2 race in Qatar in 2011 I was at the back of the grid. I hadn't done so well in qualification and all I could see was bikes in front of me! I made a good start and got to the first turn in the middle of the pack and all hell broke loose. It was crazy to see how people were banging and shifting around and I got on the brakes so hard to deal with it that everyone passed me and I was last coming out of the turn! After that I settled down and made positions but right after that first race I thought

'what the hell am I doing here?! I was so good in 125s and in Moto2 I'm not Pol...I'm a knob'. It is funny, looking back.

**In 125s there were a few guys who could win a Grand Prix, in MotoGP the same but it seems a lot more open in Moto2...**

That's the fun and the best part of this category and it gives the people watching more enjoyment. The engines are the same and the chassis don't change a lot so it means a similar level. For me it's the best category in MotoGP and maybe we should take a few less risks because it can be so dangerous.









**You've won races in 125 by a long distance. That requires focus but I imagine you have to be very zoned-in for Moto2 because a threat can come from anywhere...**

You have to be focused for 100% of the race because many riders want to pass you and normally there can be quite a queue for that! Sometimes the difference between us is not due to the power of the engine and if you make a mistake then you cannot always use the technical side to recover from any mistakes. A small slip can be really costly. You can be in second position the whole race but you cannot switch off for a moment. If you do get passed then it is a job to overtake people because the bikes are big and heavy; it is so different to 125s or Moto3 in terms being able to recover. Fighting in Moto2 is nice to watch but it's really hard work.

**Racing in Catalunya or Jerez...is it a bit like a football match for you in terms of the homr support and noise from those massive crowds?**

It can be difficult to hear the fans because the bike makes such a noise and you have the ear plugs...but the sights and the atmosphere of being in those places all weekend really gives you energy and a 'power'. Wherever you go around the circuit or the paddock or even in the local town you have people telling you 'come on Pol' and 'you can do it Pol' and it boosts you. We are lucky to have many circuits in Spain on the GP calendar and sometimes it can give you that 0.5 of a second extra.

**Do you sometimes wish you had more time for fans over a race weekend because it seems you are normally very busy?**

Yes, there is always a lot to do from when we arrive to when we leave. Sponsors pay a lot for

us to race and you have to give them that time, that smile, that photo and that dialogue. You have to deal with being able to focus on your racing and your job - and it doesn't always go smoothly - to being this friendly and happy guy. It can be difficult and it means you have to be polite and correct and sometimes explain that a request is not possible.

**But you appear very good at it. You seem a bit of a natural for the cameras...**

I think all riders have bad days but I'm lucky because I have a team and sponsors around me that know about the job and what goes with it. They also know me, and that sometimes after a bad race I'll just need a bit of time alone.

**How do you feel about the battles and the relationship with Marc? You have a lot of history in both categories and the next chapter should take place in MotoGP soon...**

I think that year of battling we had in 125s was really good for me because I learnt a lot of things. You never stop developing as a rider. With Marc I improved a lot, and had to. When you fight with the best guy then you rise to his level. I think I lost the world championship because we made two or three mistakes that you simply cannot make and especially in Moto2 last year it was a slightly new scenario for us to be going for the title in that category. Marc was already pushing from 2011. The fight between us...well I think our relationship is pretty special because we are very different riders but we have to have that respect because we are rivals. We can have a good relationship, and why not? I hope to be with a good motorbike in MotoGP so we can fight again because he beat me last year and I want revenge!



# THE

# RUNN







# VIEWS

Photos by Dorna/[www.motogp.com](http://www.motogp.com)

**LOSAIL WILL BE A BUSY PLACE OF ORGANISATION, NERVES AND EXPECTATION AS YOU READ THIS. THE LONG MOTOGP CALENDAR BEGINS THIS WEEKEND SO HERE IS A VISUAL GUIDE TO THE BIKES, TEAMS AND RIDERS THAT WILL BE HITTING THE FLOODLIT TARMAC AT QATAR AND WILL THEN RACE IN AMERICA, SPAIN, ITALY, FRANCE, GERMANY, UK, CZECH REPUBLIC, HOLLAND, MALAYSIA, AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN. GET READY...**



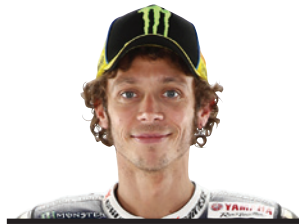
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**JORGE LORENZO**







**VALENTINO ROSSI**

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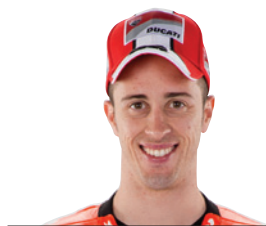
MARC MARQUEZ

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## DUCATI TEAM DESMOSEDICI GP13



ANDREA DOVIZIOSO







NICKY HAYDEN

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## GO&FUN HONDA GRESINI HONDA RC213V



ALVARO BAUTISTA







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# PAUL BIRD MOTORSPORT

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**YONNY HERNANDEZ**





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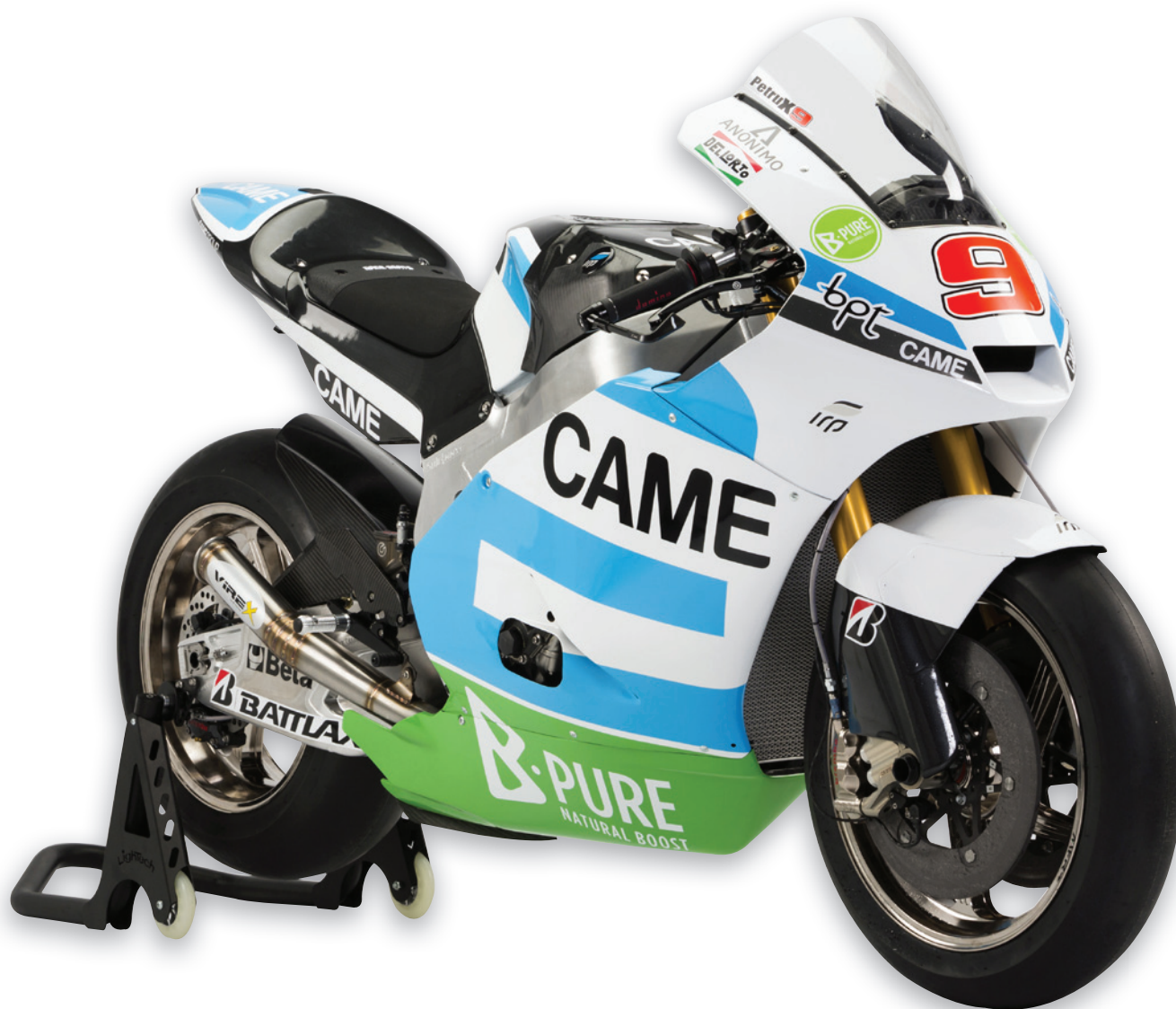




## CAME IODARACING PROJECT IODA-SUTER



DANILO PETRUCCI

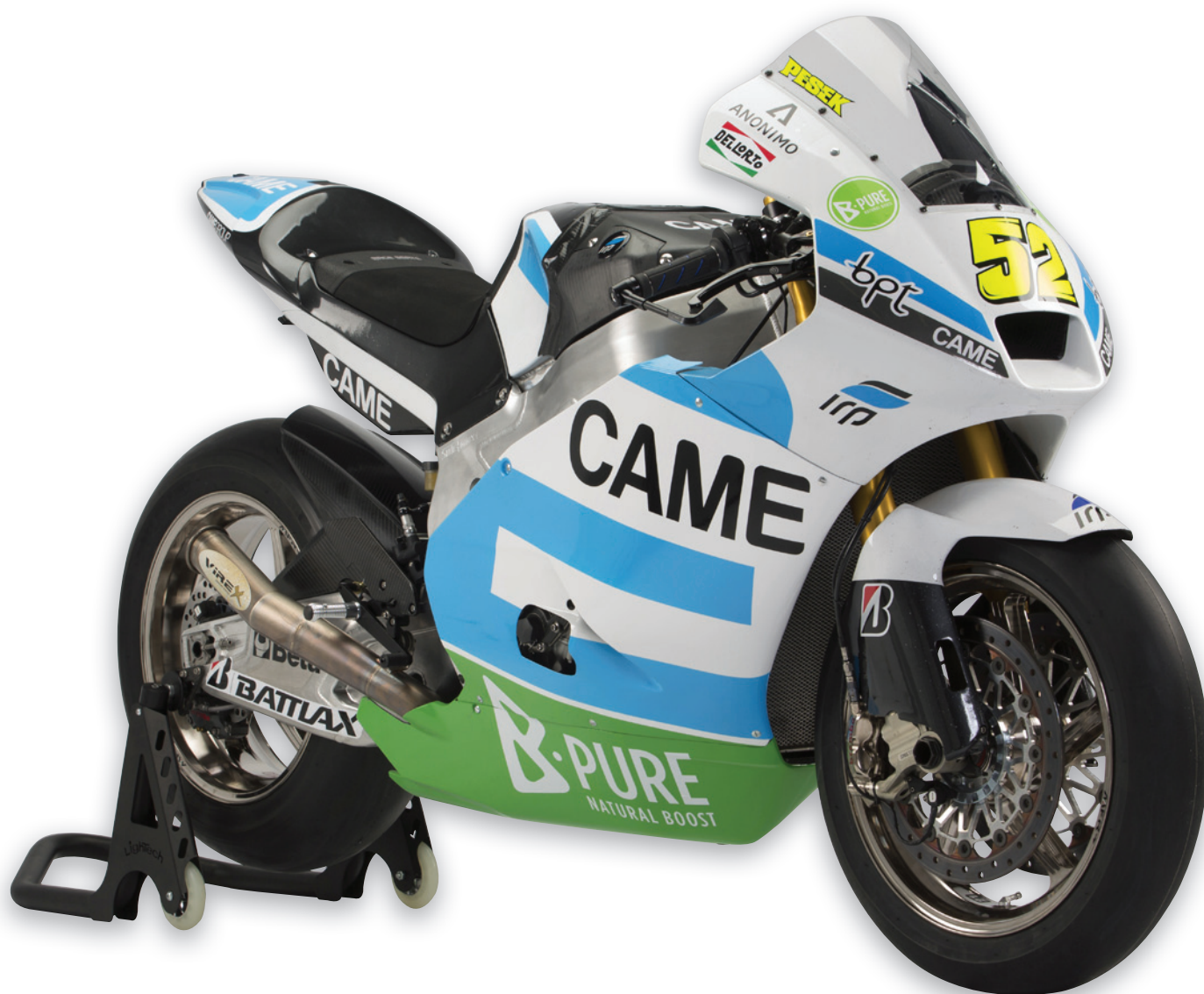






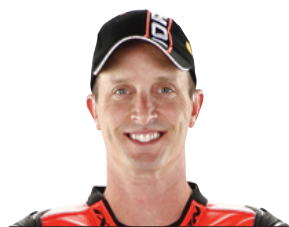
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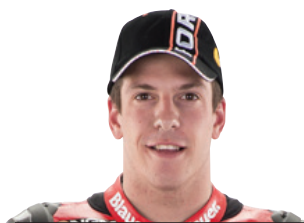
# NGM MOBILE FORWARD RACING FTR KAWASAKI



COLIN EDWARDS







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## TAKE YOUR SEATS...

By Gavin Emmett

**T**he safety screen has been withdrawn and the anticipation is steadily building for this coming weekend's curtain-raising start of what promises to be a truly dramatic MotoGP World Championship. With all the pre-season rehearsals out of the way and the riders waiting in the wings for the 'off', just what can we expect in the 2013 production?

A quick glance at the odds says the bookmakers are none the wiser about the destination of the title, with similar prices being offered for the reigning World Champion Jorge Lorenzo and his compatriot and long-time nemesis Dani Pedrosa. Both now boast bags of experience at the top level having battled for the championship consistently over the last few years, but anyone who has kept even one eye on the winter comings-and-goings will know that the story is a lot more complex than that.

Pedrosa's late season form at the tail end of 2012, when he won six of the last eight races, suggests he has cracked the consistency he has craved for so long, but Lorenzo in turn was coasting at the time, ensuring solid podium finishes to seal his second crown. However it is Casey Stoner's retirement that has opened the door for someone else to become the podium regular alongside the two Spaniards.

Of those who will fancy filling that slot, perhaps Marc Marquez is the one who has shone brightest during testing. The rookie may be just taking his first steps in the championship, but none will be surprised if Marquez launches an assault on the category in his debut campaign. A look at his past performances suggests that he will

take a bit of time to get to grips with the new class, not necessarily in terms of speed, but in finishing races.

Someone who shouldn't have that problem is the 'veteran' Valentino Rossi, who returns to Yamaha and started to show some renewed familiarity with the ways of his old M1 towards the latter part of the test programme. There are question marks however over the nine-time world champion's head considering the toil he underwent at Ducati, and those doubts will remain until he shows different in the early races. We all know Rossi can be fast, but can he show that vigor and desire to win again? To unearth the kinds of moves seen and wondered at Catalunya and Laguna Seca that let Lorenzo and Stoner know they were in a fight?

### **Gav's MotoGP tip:** **1. Pedrosa, 2. Lorenzo** **3. Rossi, 4. Marquez**

It is hard to look beyond those four for championship success, but don't hesitate that the likes of Cal Crutchlow, Stefan Bradl and Alvaro Bautista will be nipping at their heels to snatch any poles or podiums that may go begging. Who also knows what progress Ducati can make during 2013? So far, it looks like they will still have their work cut out to take on the Japanese.

My prediction in one line? A fearsome fight at the limit, with more all-Spanish podiums than not.



**TEST**

# CANDY

By Roland Brown, Photos by Milagro









***“Ducati’s success is built on the link between racing and roadgoing machinery....”***



**D**ucati has a history of creating exotic, expensive streetbikes with an eye on racing regulations. ‘Homologation specials’, as they’re known. Cutting-edge models with tuned engines, lavishly equipped chassis and the letters SP (for Sport Production) or R (for Racing) after their name.

Latest in the illustrious list is the 1199 Panigale R and Ducati make no secret of the fact that it has been created primarily to boost their World Superbike challenge. After all, the firm’s success is built on the link between racing and

roadgoing machinery. Many at Ducati are unhappy that their twin-cylinder bike is strangled with intake restrictors and more by the Superbike regulations, despite already being down on power to its four-cylinder rivals. If a hotted-up streetbike can help even things up — and make Carlos Checa and Co more competitive — then great; the thinking goes in the Borgo Panigale district of Bologna after which the 1199 is named. And if there are eager customers willing to pay a high premium for the 2000 units streetbikes Ducati must build over two years, so much the better...







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TEST



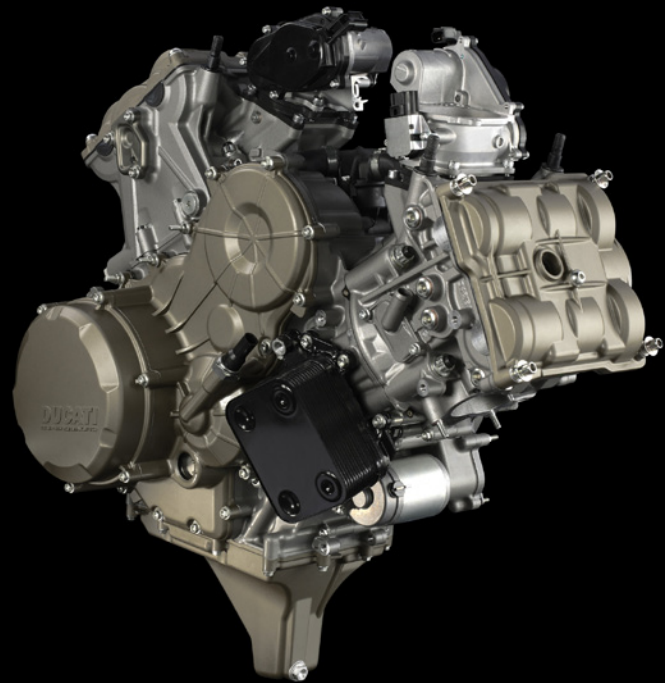


In fact this R-model is closely based on the standard 1199, and more closely still on the Tricolore model that was previously the most expensive Panigale. The main boost to Ducati's 1198cc, desmo V-twin "Superquadro" engine — named after its over-square bore and stroke dimensions — comes from titanium connecting rods and a lighter flywheel, which allow it to rev 500rpm higher, to 12,000rpm.

The original Panigale's fearsome peak output of 195bhp at 10,750rpm is unchanged, but the lighter internals allow quicker revving. The R-bike's extra revs mean the gearing can be lowered by two teeth without reducing top speed, increasing available torque. The eight-valve engine's ride-by-wire throttle system is also revised to boost midrange response.

There's little change to the 1199's chassis with its radical aluminium monocoque frame in place of Ducati's traditional steel tubes. The R-model's only update is a new adjustable swing-arm pivot. This allows racers to fine-tune how much the bike squats under acceleration, balancing the improved handling of a higher pivot against the extra traction of a lower one.

In R-bike tradition this Ducati also uses carbon-fibre for parts including front mudguard and rear hugger. Machined aluminium caps facilitate removal of the mirrors. Ferociously powerful ABS-equipped Brembo brakes, Marchesini forged wheels and Ducati's sophisticated data acquisition system are included, as is a Termignoni race exhaust. The petrol tank is finished in a unique blend of red paint and brushed aluminium.









***“It’s a stunningly fast and high-tech new streetbike.  
The old saying “racing improves the breed” has rarely  
been more appropriate....”***







The R-model's screen is also slightly taller and thus more aerodynamically efficient with a rider in place. That made it easier to hide behind on the long main straight at the bike's launch at the spectacular new Circuit of The Americas in Texas, where the Ducati thundered to 175mph with spine-tingling haste, revving to that new 12,000rpm limit through the first five gears as I hooked through the box with the assistance of the standard fitment quick-shifter. The Panigale's already stunning top-end performance has been mildly enhanced, but it's lower down that the bigger benefit comes. The R-bike was notably stronger below 7000rpm, punching out of the track's several second-

gear turns with a force that the standard 1199 couldn't have matched. Although some of the change was down to the race exhaust, Ducati's injection and gearing mods have made a notable difference.

This improvement doesn't come just with the Panigale R. Ducati's gearing and ride-by-wire changes will apply to all 1199 models this year, and can also be retro-fitted to 2012 bikes. (The injection mod is a free upgrade but owners will have to pay for the sprocket.) The other models will lose some top speed, because they won't rev past 11,500rpm. But on the road, especially, there will be a useful gain.







## TEST

As before the Ducati handled with a wondrously light and controllable feel, helped by its sublime Öhlins suspension, which is adjustable at the press of a button. But despite some tweaking I didn't manage to get the Panigale to stay stable on the pit straight where, despite its Öhlins steering damper, it began a mild weave as I accelerated out of the final turn.

More fine-tuning would hopefully have sorted that. I was also keen to adjust the swing-arm pivot, but there was no time for that on the launch. Such advanced tinkering is mainly for the likes of Checa, who set pole position for the season-opening World Superbike round at Phillip Island before crashing heavily in Race One and failing to score.

Whether the R-model's new features can help the Spanish veteran regain the championship that he won in 2011 remains to be seen. What's beyond doubt is that Ducati's efforts to help have resulted in a stunningly fast and high-tech new streetbike, and an outstandingly involving and exciting one too. The old saying "racing improves the breed" has rarely been more appropriate.









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MSR WELCOMES XAVIER BOOG TO THE TEAM









# DRESSING THE BEST

HOW VALUABLE IS PUTTING A SHIRT ON THE BACK OF A PREMIER ATHLETE?

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Ray Archer

**F**or four years Answer suited and kitted one of the most high profile motorcycle racing athletes in the world. James Stewart's use of the dynamic clothing company - that will celebrate four decades of existence in 2016 - helped push the gear back into major reckoning with the industry's main players. The JS7 deal cost the Californian firm a dollar total that entered the realm of millions and was returned with a 30% increase in sales and much wider awareness. As Stewart has shown in the past season-and-a-half making a heavy

investment into a single individual at the top level of a dangerous sport can be risky. For all the visibility and time as brand ambassador if the goods are not on the racetrack then is the return a poor one? To know a bit more OTOR chatted to distributor Tucker Rocky's (safeguards of Answer, MSR and Pro Taper amongst others) International Sales and Marketing Manager Nick McBride to gauge the 'how and why' as the name(s) look to make a big push on a global scale and are already backing riders in the FIM Motocross World Championship...



## On whether a major athlete investment ultimately pays off...

There is definitely a lot of money thrown around for these guys but I do think it is a viable investment for brands and it can provide a shot in the arm for companies. If you don't have a key rider who is out there performing on a weekly basis in front of the crowd then you lose the limelight. You can do whatever you want with magazines and advertisements but I believe the kids are still drawn to and are inspired by the stars; they wanna be like Cairoli or Herlings on the track, the Carmichaels, McGraths, Stewarts and the Villopotos now. They want to simulate 'an act' and wear products like these guys. The cool thing about us transitioning from James Stewart to Jake Weimer is that Jake has the personality to attract the weekend warrior. He is very approachable and that is great for a brand. When you have a budget then having a rider is a key part of that and then it is very much up to us to follow up with promotion, advertisement and getting the product out there. This is something – thinking back now – that we probably needed to do more of when James was with us but that alliance was the beginning of being able to talk to people like Rockstar and Skull Candy and eventually making those deals happen.

## On judging a strategy of putting the majority of budget on a star or spreading it around...

It's not simple. Every year you have to sit back and do your research and homework to see what avenues are best and what eggs go in which basket. Consumer trends change and when economies dip people rely more on PoP (Point of Purchase). When they are doing better then customers look at and want to be like the top guys. It is tricky but if you do the leg-work upfront then you can take a lot of those questions out of the equation. You end up with a narrowed focus. If you set yourself up well and you are not setting things in stone then during the year you change the priorities and contents of the 'baskets' to see if something new will work out better.





## ENDORSEMENT & ANSWER









**On whether the rider's personality makes a difference or it's just the name on the shirt that counts...**

You definitely need to partner-up with people who are 'into' your brand as they are pretty much an extension of your company; they are the spokespeople. Like [factory Rockstar Energy Suzuki World MX1's] Kevin Strijbos. I have been dealing with him for two-three years now to get something going and since day one he has been so approachable and receptive to new ideas that we've come up with. I believe that enthusiasm and communication from him will translate down to the consumer. The guys that are really 'for' the brand are willing to work with you more; tradeshow, autographs and appearances. They will be disciples for your company, which is pretty cool. You know, investing in a major athlete usually doesn't pay-off in the short-term and if you look at the immediate statistics in terms of sales then it can be hard to justify, but you cannot just look at things in front of your face, you have to think about the benefits over time. I don't think we would have our international focus and priority now if it wasn't for what we got going with James.

**On the after-effects of a major deal...the roll-back from the Stewart years for Answer...**

We are really appreciative of the relationship we had with James and it worked out great for us, drawing a lot more eyes to our brand and opening doors. Now it is our responsibility to keep those eyes on us. Initially it started with James but now we are really working with our riders to come up with gear ideas and concepts and design fitment and feel of the product that not only works on a professional level but also filters all the way through the line. The Stewart association elevated our whole game

at Answer and translated all the way through from the entry level to the Pro competition stuff. It is rider inspired, and that's one of the funny things about James because when he was with us he loved the entry-level gear and said when he was out there he felt like he was wearing a set of jeans. There was a lot of constructive criticism and we were able to implement that. I think we hit a home run and it gave the brand proper credibility.

**On attracting licences to offer variations and making sure the brands hit the right wave-length...**

We have some big partnerships with other brands here in the USA. Rockstar and Skull Candy lines for Answer and Metal Mulisha and Rockstar again for MSR and to see people in Europe gravitate towards those collaborations at the trade shows like Intermot in Germany was pretty cool. One of the good things about our current sports group is that we have a core motocross brand that fits every consumer. I think when companies target a big audience and want to go for a shotgun effect then that's when you have a hard time performing. Answer is definitely for the youthful competitor and the racer that wants to be the next superstar. With Answer we are sticking to our guns and we want to be the young race-orientated brand and that is reflected by some of our associations here in the States and also abroad. If you are into motocross and you haven't heard of Malcolm Smith or 'On Any Sunday' then it must be a relatively new sport to you so MSR encompasses that. It's for the guys who want to go out and ride and don't necessarily want to look like the other flashy kids out there. It has that model of 'one brand fits all' and a broad demographic with race gear but also adventure jackets, pants and gear for older riders.



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## GOING NORTH (OR SOUTH...)

By Steve Matthes

**T**he news that Chad Reed is getting some minor surgery done to his knee and will miss one, and maybe more, races certainly rocked the paddock. 2013 isn't going to be a season that Reed puts at the top of his career accomplishments and this news just makes it worse. I spoke to Chad about it on Friday in Toronto and although he's fourth in the points with a couple of podiums, he didn't seem too interested in riding this thing out and trying to secure that fourth spot. He's got to get ready for the motocross season to try and salvage something from this so-so campaign.

The surgery isn't anything major but I think he'll miss at least one round, maybe longer. Reed's also got 2014 negotiations on his mind as he tries to figure out if he A) wants to race another year or B) wants to stay with Honda. There have been talks between Reed and Yamaha about maybe having the 22 finish his career on the brand he started or he may just stick with Honda as he's certainly showed that he can ride that bike as well. No matter what happens (or when he comes back) the sport is going to miss the two-two while he's out.

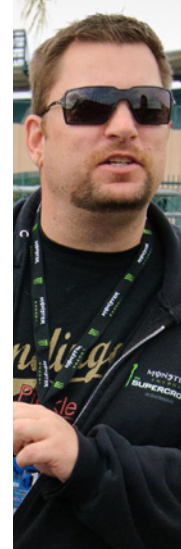
One unemployed top rider has found a ride in Canada. Brett Metcalfe officially signed his deal with Leading Edge Kawasaki a couple of weeks ago and he's headed up north for the nine race CMRC series. Metcalfe hopes to contest the opening American national in Hangtown and then head up to try and help the team win its second straight MX1 title (Matt Goerke took it last year). Many people are already declaring it a walk in the park for "Bretty" but he's not one of them. As a Canadian that tries to attend a CMRC national or two every year and goes to all the USA races, I have a unique opportunity to weigh in on this debate.

And while I do think Metcalfe, barring the always-present injury risk, will win the championship (especially with three deep sand tracks on the

schedule) it won't be easy. There have been more than a few Americans who have headed up to Canada thinking they'd be pretty good only to find out that the hometown guys do haul ass. Familiarity with the tracks, schedule, lack of track prep which makes them not get as rough and the fact that on their home circuits the native Canadian riders have that chip on their shoulder all add up, to me, no cakewalk for Metcalfe. Riders like Colton Facciotti, Bobby Kinsky (an American but he's been racing up there for years) and others are going to make Brett's life tough up there. Still, it's a nice move for Metcalfe. He stands to make over six figures plus in salary should he win-a-bunch and it can be a nice kick start to his career, much like it did to Goerke.

### Reed has got 2014 negotiations on his mind. Will he stay with Honda?

With the only off-week of the supercross series here, most of the top riders will try to squeeze in some outdoor testing in hopes of getting some kind of base set-up for Hangtown which is only two weeks after the final SX round. As a former factory mechanic, it's a tough thing because you're so looking forward to not travelling and having a week to relax and get off the treadmill of pro motocross but on the other hand you've got to build another bike to start outdoor testing on and then head out to motocross tracks to get work done. There's no rest for these riders and teams, it's a vicious circle. After Vegas SX is over, those two weeks before the first national are basically 'hell weeks'. There are long hours put in by everyone on these teams and this weekend, Easter weekend, is about the last time you're sitting at home trying to get away from it all.







DESTIN  
CANTRELL





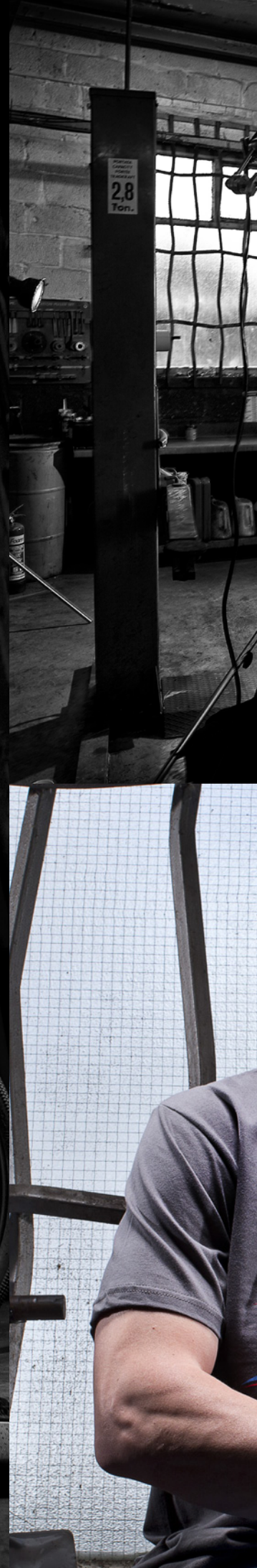
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# PUSH

These fantastic Ray Archer portraits of former British Motocross Champion Brad Anderson show off a new English clothing brand based out of Newcastle called **Push**.

Creator Paul Stokoe took influence from old American racing and motorsport posters and the logos are mixed with a clear and direct design accompanied by some bold garment colours. Push products should start to emerge inside the next two months and the official website – that is close to completion – will house the e-shop for buying the clothing direct.

So far pullovers, t-shirts, hoodies and caps for both men and women are the primary focus but plan is for further expansion. Definitely carrying a cool look.

OTOR will run some more photos of the finished 100% cotton gear with the platisol ink screen printed logos when Push is ready to hit the hangers.

In the meantime check out the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Pushtowin> and the catalogue here: [http://issuu.com/pushwear/docs/push\\_wear\\_issue\\_1\\_2013\\_no\\_bleed?mode=window](http://issuu.com/pushwear/docs/push_wear_issue_1_2013_no_bleed?mode=window)















## BACKPAGE

2013 Monster Energy MX girls and JCD in the Yamaha Photobooth  
By Ray Archer











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**'On-track Off-road'** is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at [www.ontrackoffroad.com](http://www.ontrackoffroad.com) every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

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